



Options to Respond to Intergovernmental Requests for Assistance

ISSUE

To provide possible options the RCMP can present the Minister, should a provincial or territorial government request assistance to respond to protests and blockades.

BACKGROUND

- The administration of justice, including policing is a provincial and territorial responsibility. Provinces have further delegated responsibility for police to municipalities.
- When municipalities require additional police resources (i.e. funding, equipment, police officers, specialized services, etc.), they should seek resources from within their own province.
- Requests for interprovincial assistance or for federal assistance should be made at the Ministerial-level.
- Policing of protests is the responsibility of the local police of jurisdiction.
- While the RCMP is not the local police of jurisdiction in Ottawa / National Capital Region, RCMP National Division work closely with the Ottawa Police Service, given their shared mandate of public safety. When resources are required in the National Capital Region to deliver services of the federal mandate, the Commissioner can re-deploy regular members or public service employees working in Federal Policing or at National Headquarters.

CURRENT STATUS

- On February 7th, the Mayor of Ottawa wrote to Minister of Public Safety Marco Mendicino requesting "1000 regular officers, 600 public order officers, 1000 investigative officers, 100 civilian staff, and all supporting resources".
- The Commissioner can deploy non-contract policing resources at her discretion. Should non-contract sources of officers be exhausted, additional Contract Policing resources can be requested and temporarily deployed from across the country under the terms of the Police Service Agreements (PSA):
 - If, in the opinion of the Commissioner, an Emergency in an area of provincial or territorial responsibility exists or is likely to exist outside the Province the Commissioner may, after consultation with the Provincial Minister and with the approval of the Federal Minister, temporarily withdraw up to 10 per cent of the Members of the Provincial Police Service (including any necessary Equipment) to deal with such an Emergency under Section 9.3 of the Police Service Agreement
 - Article 9.4 contains similar provisions for an Emergency in an area of federal responsibility.

- The RCMP has various specialized capacities that could be considered as additional RCMP support for efforts to defuse the situation and has extensive experience in dealing with protests and major events.
- In particular, consideration could be given to deploying members trained as Community Conflict Management Group (CCMG) members to assist OPS in negotiation and communication with protest groups.
- These members have received specialized training to enhance the skills required to resolve conflict effectively between dissenting stakeholders using Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques such as Interest Based Negotiation. Candidates for the CCMG training are selected based on their knowledge of public order, community and cultural issues, communication skills, flexibility, self-control and composure. Trained members learn to establish and maintain open and transparent lines of communication with stakeholders to facilitate the prevention and de-escalation of disorder. CCMG trained members are instrumental in building and maintaining relationships of trust, respect, and mutual understanding among all stakeholders before, during and after protests.
- There are 314 CCMG-trained active members, the majority of whom are part of the provincial police services in the jurisdictions where the RCMP provide service under PSAs.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- In the event that the Commissioner elects to invoke provisions under Article 9, it will be important to ensure an informed decision is made in regard to whether the Emergency is considered a federal or provincial area of responsibility to ensure consistent application of the PSA throughout the country.
- The impact of withdrawing resources on the home jurisdiction, particularly specialized resources must be assessed carefully to ensure that public safety and public order can be maintained in the home jurisdiction.
- The role of the RCMP in the critical incident, particularly as it relates to command structure and tactical approaches needs to be well-understood by the RCMP and OPS.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

- That the Minister respond to the Mayor of Ottawa and advise the request for assistance be directed to the Solicitor General of Ontario.
- Consideration be given to begin planning for withdrawal of contract policing resources under Article 9.4 to provide assistance to the City of Ottawa/Ottawa Police Service.
- Funding authorities and a mechanism to track expenditures and recover costs be established as soon as possible, if the RCMP anticipates deployment to respond to the provincial request.